

VZCZCXRO3283
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #0007/01 0021524
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 021524Z JAN 08
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4817
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8583
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3698
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 2569
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 6330
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 6155
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2738
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFISS/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFISS/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFISS/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFISS/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFISS/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000007

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2008

In Today's Papers

Ammunition and Drugs Seized from PKK Shelters in Diyarbakir and Bingol

All papers report on the Turkish General Staff (TGS) announcement that security forces seized 550 kg of ammonium nitrate and 200 kg of illegal drugs from four PKK shelters in Diyarbakir and Bingol provinces. The TGS said the drugs illustrate the role of the PKK in regional drug trafficking.

Turkey's Ambassador to Iraq Meets Vice President Hashimi
Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others report the Turkish ambassador to Iraq, Derya Kanbay, met the Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi in Baghdad yesterday. Discussions focused on the PKK and Turkish cross border operations into northern Iraq. Vice President Hashimi asked Ambassador Kanbay for Turkey's coordination with the Iraqi government before launching future cross border attacks. According to papers, Ambassador Kanbay said Turkey has been acting carefully not to harm civilians.

Baykal: 2008 will be a Year of Constitutional Crisis
Deniz Baykal, leader of the opposition CHP, told leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet "2008 will be a year of constitutional crisis in Turkey," referring to government plans to overhaul the constitution. Baykal claimed the AKP's draft of a new constitution would "deteriorate the unitary state structure, secularism, and judicial independence." He added, "For the first time in Turkey, someone who has struggled against the values of the Republic of Turkey occupies the presidential post. With the new constitution, they want to change the course of Turkey. The debate over the constitution is not an ordinary one; it's an effort to radically change the state structure," Baykal emphasized.

Every Year, 50,000 Illegal Immigrants Transit through Turkey to Europe
Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports on its front page that in 2007, approximately 50,000 illegal immigrants were detained in Turkey. The illegal immigrants were passing through Turkey on their

way to Europe, according to data released by the Turkish military. Over the past ten years, the number of illegal immigrants apprehended in Turkey reached 129,792. Iraqis top the list of migrants with 5,065, followed by 5,050 Palestinians, and 1,668 Mauritians. According to the report, migrants pay \$500-\$1,500 to human smugglers for passage. Over the past twelve years, human trafficking in Turkey has become a \$2 billion business.

Editorial Commentary on Turkish Foreign Policy in 2008
Sami Kohen observed in mainstream Milliyet (1/2): "All signs indicate that Turkey will continue to engage in active foreign policy initiatives during 2008. 2008 inherits many problems from 2007; let us evaluate some of these inherited problems. It is obvious that Turkey's cross-border operations will continue into northern Iraq until the PKK presence there is destroyed. So far, the international community has supported these operations, but only because the aim and extent of the operations has remained limited. Thus, Turkey should be careful not to expand cross border operations to the point where the international community withdraws its support. Next, Turkey must pay attention to developments in northern Iraq. Turkey should carefully consider its relations with the Barzani Administration and with the Iraqi central government, remembering that the Kirkuk issue will play a major role in bilateral relations. During the first half of 2007, relations with the US deteriorated, but relations improved immensely after the Bush-Erdogan meeting in November. The bilateral strategic partnership against the PKK will continue. It is unlikely that this new approach will change, even after the US presidential elections in November. Next, Turkey needs to work with France in order to change Sarkozy's opinion about Turkey's EU membership. Concerning Cyprus, Turkey may discover new opportunities after the elections in February. Greek PM Karamanlis' visit to Turkey at the beginning of

ANKARA 00000007 002 OF 002

2008 will be a turning point for bilateral relations. While Iran and Turkey are willing to continue their energy cooperation, possible sanctions against Iran may affect bilateral relations negatively. Despite the new energy rivalry that has developed between the two countries, Turkey and Russia have worked for several years to strengthen their political and economic partnership. In summary, the success of Turkey's foreign policy in 2008 depends on its ability to take advantage of the opportunities without sinking into the problems."

TV Highlights NTV

Domestic News

- In Turkey, the value added tax (VAT) for food was reduced from 18 to 8 percent as of January 1.
- The Turkish General Staff (TGS) said two Greek coastal security boats and 13 fishing boats violated Turkish territorial waters on Monday.
- The Turkish Parliament is expected in the coming weeks to approve new smoking restrictions in public places such as bars and restaurants. Steep fines await smokers who defy the tough new restrictions.
- Turkey's population will exceed 100 million in 2050.

International News

- Pakistan's Election Commission will announce Wednesday whether the January 8 parliamentary elections should be delayed because of violence sparked by last week's assassination of Benazir Bhutto.
- Israeli daily Yediot Ahronot reports Israeli security officials said they have intelligence indicating al-Qaeda cells infiltrated Turkey and plan to target Israeli and US interests.
- Slovenia has taken over the rotating EU term presidency.

WILSON